

✓ "Advertiser" Wednesday 6/3/95.
"Anglo-Colonial News"

Professor Lamb and Professor Wilkins, of Owen's College, visited London on Wednesday, and spent some hours personally interviewing the five gentlemen whom they had selected out of the 19 candidates as most suitable for the

classical mastership at Adelaide. They finally rejected two and the credentials of the remaining trio go out to the colonial authorities by to-day's mail. I as usual asked for the names, &c., of the fortunate men. To my astonishment Mr. Playford replied that he could give no information whatever regarding them. "Why this thudness?" I murmured, but the Agent-General didn't seem to hear. Subsequently it transpired from another source that the authorities on your side object to this class of information being communicated to the press. Their feelings were, it seems, sadly ruffled at the newspapers learning the result of Professor Lamb's labors as to the appointment finally awarded to Mr. Mitchell. They complained that the disclosure impaired their dignity. When I heard this I felt shockingly guilty. To have assisted even inadvertently in impairing such an important unknown quantity as the dignity of your University senate or council was extremely painful. Will the "potent, grave, and reverend" gentlemen allow me, however, to respectfully point out one thing. There is an eminently practical reason why such selections are as a rule confided to the press at this side. It guards against any serious social disqualification in the candidates being overlooked till too late. Professor Lamb and his colleague answer for the professional status of the men they choose. But for their moral antecedents and characters they cannot be responsible, and of their social suitability half an hour's chat can't give them much chance of judging. In the present instance, for example, one or more of the three learned gentlemen Professor Lamb has picked out may conceivably have levanted in happy bygone years with his neighbor's wife, or may hold heterodox opinions as to the necessity of the marriage service in the union of the sexes, or may have an eccentric penchant for skirt dancing *a la* Lord Yarmouth in feminine attire. Or even, should all three men be blameless Christian gentlemen, it lies within the bounds of possibility one of their wives drinks, or has a tongue capable of devastating a continent, or—worst of all—is a new woman. Well, in any of these or a hundred other eventualities you'll know nothing till the new professor and his wife (if he has one) are in residence. In the slangy words of Mr. A. Roberts, "What price the dignity of the Adelaide University authorities then?" On the other hand, supposing the selections to be announced in the home papers you are safe; for of course when good Mrs. Smith reads that Mr. Paynun, of Owings College (who left Towchester without settling with his creditors and in company with an unspeakable bussey), has been appointed professor at Adelaide she feels she must warn the Agent-General for South Australia of my gentleman's real character.